(ii) *Other Crops.*

Potatoes are of twofold importance, for not only are they a staple article of diet in many cases, but they are also used for distilling vodka and other spirits, particularly in Estonia. Estonia's production during the period tended to fall off, however, as the Russian market for spirits was lost, though there was a notable rise in yield by the end of the period. In Latvia, and still more in Lithuania, there were considerable increases in gross production and yield. The figures are as follows:

TABLE 17. *Potato Production*

	Area under crop annual average ('000 ha.)			*Production annual average ('000 quintals)*			*Yield per ha. annual average (quintals per ha.)*		
	1909–13	*1921–5*	*1926–30*	*1909–13*	*1921–5*	*1926–30*	*1909–13*	*1921–5*	*1926–30*
Potatoes									
Estonia .	80	70	67	8,340	7,014	7,570	104·6	100·2	113·0
Latvia. .	80*	72	85	6,385*	6,707	8,458	80·3*	93·2	99·2
Lithuania .	119*	156†	141	7,959*	17,170†	15,261	66·8*	110·1†	108·2

* Not including the whole territory.
† 1922–5.

Apart from fodder, flax, and other industrial crops, both of which are referred to below, the only other crops of importance during this period were peas, beans, and lentils, which were grown in all three countries. The growing of sugar-beet received much State encouragement in Latvia and Lithuania after 1931 and will be dealt with below.[1] Fruit-growing in the Baltic States is not extensive.

(iii) *Flax.*

Before the War and during the first few years that followed it, flax was one of the most important commodities exported from the Baltic States. Livonian flax, grown in territories which now belong partly to Latvia and partly to Estonia, is still one of the best standard grades, while some 12 per cent. of the world's flax was produced by these three countries in 1925. But, during this period, the Baltic States had to contend with numerous difficulties, of which the two most important were the increasing competition from Russia and the difficulty of cultivating on a large scale an industrial crop such as flax where the land had been divided into small-holdings. Except in Lithuania there was a steady decrease in the production and yield, as shown in Table 18 on p. 112.

The only other important industrial crops which were grown during

[1] See below, pp. 147–8.

The remarkable increase[1] shown in production since 1930 is partly, no doubt, due to the poor harvests in the 1926–30 period and also to the effects of the agricultural reforms carried out immediately after the War, which had scarcely had time to appear by 1930. But, both in Estonia and Latvia, the shortage of exchange induced the Government to encourage the farmers to bring more land under grain, particularly wheat, which to a large extent had been imported before this period. The average acreage under the four principal cereal crops increased by 5·1 per cent. in Estonia, 7·3 per cent. in Lithuania, and as much as 10·9 per cent. in Latvia, as between 1926–30 and 1931–5, and production of wheat was nearly doubled in Estonia between 1926–30 and 1931–5, more than doubled in Latvia. There was also a heavy increase in rye production;[2] and, as will be seen, both countries have practically ceased to import grain in normal years. Agricultural efficiency, too, has increased; in every case but one in the above table there was a rise in the yield per ha. as between 1926–30 and 1931–5. Government assistance, especially in technical education, the provision of seed, and the drainage of marsh land, was largely responsible for this development.

Progress during these years was similar as regards most of the other principal crops, especially potatoes, where there was a remarkable increase both in production and yield:

TABLE 34. *Potato Production*

	Area under crop (thousand ha.)				*Production (thousand quintals)*				*Yield (quintals per ha.)*			
	Average 1926–30	*Average 1931–5*	*Year 1936*	*Year 1937**	*Average 1926–30*	*Average 1931–5*	*Year 1936*	*Year 1937**	*Average 1926–30*	*Average 1931–5*	*Year 1936*	*Year 1937**
Estonia	67	70	74	76	7,570	8,742	10,306	9,160	113·0	124·9	139·3	120·5
Latvia	85	108	120	127	8,458	13,363	16,115	17,817	99·3	123·7	134·3	140·3
Lithuania	141	175	179	184	15,961	20,013	21,108	25,088	108·3	114·4	115·9	136·3

* 1937: provisional figures only.

The cultivation of flax tended to decrease somewhat, owing largely to unfavourable conditions in international markets, particularly to the competition from Russia. The decrease would no doubt have been greater but for the fact that the textile industries of Estonia and Latvia tended to increase their consumption of flax after 1931 in order to save foreign exchange. The figures are shown in Table 35. On the other hand, a really important development was the growth in the cultivation of sugar-beet in Latvia and Lithuania. This was greatly encouraged by the establishment of sugar-beet factories

[1] It will be noted, however, that the harvest of 1936 was well below the 1931–5 average.

[2] In Estonia the Government has encouraged rye-growing since 1930 by purchasing the su[illegible] crop during the autumn at fixed prices.

3: Simutis S-4 (no date) 1942 RB5 Lithuanians RB5
Baltic Countries RB1

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expanded more than 45 percent since the pre-war years. The bulk of the potato crop is used as fodder for pigs, a smaller quantity is consumed as food by the people, and the rest goes for distilling purposes.

Beets were grown in pre-war Lithuania, but in small quantities and mainly for human food. With the development of livestock breeding, beet growing for fodder has substantially expanded.

The sugar beet, unknown in Lithuania in the pre-war period, has shown a spectacular rise; 20,000 acres of sugar beets supply the country's three sugar refineries. The following is the record of sugar-beet cultivation in recent years: 1931—6,970 acres; 1932—13,146 acres; 1933—9,887 acres; 1934—9,637 acres; 1935—17,297 acres; [29] 1937—20,336 acres; 1938—21,002 acres; 1939—22,250 acres.[30]

TABLE 17

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PRODUCTION OF VARIOUS ROOT CROPS IN THE BALTIC STATES
(*In Thousands of Quintals*) [a]

YEAR	LITHUANIA	LATVIA	ESTONIA
POTATOES			
1925–29 (av.)	14,645	7,750	7,143
1930–34 (av.)	19,870	12,649	8,683
1935	17,738	14,612	8,927
1936	21,112	16,115	10,306
1937	25,099	17,820	9,856
1938	21,182	17,553	9,976
1939	23,548	16,559	8,740

[29] *Lietuvos Surasymas*, 1935, p. 24.
[30] C.S.B., 1939.

3: Simutis S-4 (no date) 1942 RB5 Lithuanians RB5
Baltic Countries RB2

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YEAR	LITHUANIA	LATVIA	ESTONIA
SUGAR BEETS			
1928–29	—	20	—
1929–30	—	35	—
1930–31	—	69	—
1931–32	67	94	—
1932–33	164	245	—
1933–34	73	291	—
1934–35	137	539	—
1935–36	198	451	—
1936–37	245	382	—
1937–38	257	442	—
1938–39 [b]	208	296	—

[a] Conversion coefficients: see footnote b of Table 11.
[b] *Revue internationale d'agriculture*, 1940, No. 2.

FLAX

L 248 439

Lithuania is one of the chief flax-producing countries in Europe, for the climate and the soil are very favorable for the cultivation of this crop. It is to be noted that in spite of its small area Lithuania ranks as the third flax exporter of the world, being surpassed only by Soviet Russia and Poland. About 200,000 acres, or a little more than three percent of all the arable land in Lithuania, is used for flax growing. Although this is a comparatively small percentage, the income derived therefrom is high. The income from flax and linseed exports in 1920–36 was greater than that from butter, pigs and pork, eggs, or grain.[31]

L [311]

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Because there are no uniform standards for the preparation of the flax, the export products vary in quality. For example, in southern Lithuania flax is plucked out only after full maturity. Later it is submitted to a process of dew retting

[31] Kriksciunas, *op. cit.*, p. 103. See Table 19 for figures.